Fact Sheet for NPDES Permit WA0991008

Hughes Farms, Inc.

October 21, 2016

Purpose of this fact sheet

This fact sheet explains and documents the decisions the Department of Ecology (Ecology) made in drafting the proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for Hughes Farms, Inc. (Hughes Farms).

This fact sheet complies with Section 173-220-060 of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), which requires Ecology to prepare a draft permit and accompanying fact sheet for public evaluation before issuing an NPDES permit.

Ecology makes the draft permit and fact sheet available for public review and comment at least thirty (30) days before issuing the final permit. Copies of the fact sheet and draft permit for Hughes Farms, NPDES permit WA0991008, are available for public review and comment from October 21, 2016, until November 20, 2016. For more details on preparing and filing comments about these documents, please see *Appendix A – Public Involvement Information.*

Hughes Farms reviewed the draft permit and fact sheet for factual accuracy. Ecology corrected any errors or omissions regarding the facility's location, history, discharges, or receiving water prior to publishing this draft fact sheet for public notice.

After the public comment period closes, Ecology will summarize substantive comments and provide responses to them. Ecology will include the summary and responses to comments in this fact sheet as *Appendix E – Response to Comments*, and publish it when issuing the final NPDES permit. Ecology will not revise the rest of the fact sheet, but the full document will become part of the legal history contained in the facility's permit file.

Summary

Hughes Farms, Inc. is a potato processing facility. The facility washes, sorts, grades, and packages various varieties of potatoes, and also packages broccoli for market. The processing season is from July through April. During those months, the process wastewater is discharged to the two lined ponds for treatment. The treated water is re-used at the plant, and excess water is discharged to the drainage ditch which ultimately discharges to Little Indian Slough.

Stormwater runoff from the paved area is also drained to the two lined ponds, comingling with the process wash water for treatment prior to discharge to Little Indian Slough.

This is Hughes Farms' first NPDES Permit. The effluent limit placed in the permit includes turbidity of 25 NTU. Monitoring requirements placed in the permit includes flow, turbidity, copper, and zinc.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

The Federal Clean Water Act (FCWA, 1972, and later amendments in 1977, 1981, and 1987) established water quality goals for the navigable (surface) waters of the United States. One mechanism for achieving the goals of the Clean Water Act is the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), administered by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA authorized the state of Washington to manage the NPDES permit program in our state. Our state legislature accepted the delegation and assigned the power and duty for conducting NPDES permitting and enforcement to Ecology. The Legislature defined Ecology's authority and obligations for the wastewater discharge permit program in 90.48 RCW (Revised Code of Washington).

The following regulations apply to municipal NPDES permits:

- Procedures Ecology follows for issuing NPDES permits (chapter 173-220 WAC).
- Water quality criteria for surface waters (chapter 173-201A WAC).
- Water quality criteria for ground waters (chapter 173-200 WAC).
- Whole effluent toxicity testing and limits (chapter 173-205 WAC).
- Sediment management standards (chapter 173-204 WAC).
- Submission of plans and reports for construction of wastewater facilities (chapter 173-240 WAC).

These rules require any industrial facility owner/operator to obtain an NPDES permit before discharging wastewater to state waters. They also help define the basis for limits on each discharge and for performance requirements imposed by the permit.

Under the NPDES permit program and in response to a complete and accepted permit application, Ecology must prepare a draft permit and accompanying fact sheet, and make them available for public review before final issuance. Ecology must also publish an announcement (public notice) telling people where they can read the draft permit, and where to send their comments, during a period of thirty days (WAC 173-220-050). (See *Appendix A – Public Involvement Information* for more detail about the public notice and comment procedures). After the public comment period ends, Ecology may make changes to the draft NPDES permit in response to comment(s). Ecology will summarize the responses to comments and any changes to the permit in *Appendix E*.

II. Background information

Table 1. General facility information

Facility information	
Applicant:	Hughes Farms, Inc.
Facility Name and Address	Hughes Farms, Inc. 1325 Farm to Market Road Mount Vernon, WA 98273
Contact at Facility	Name: David Hughes
Responsible Official	Name: David Hughes Title: President Telephone #: 360-424-3772
Industry Type	Vegetable Washing and Packaging
Type of Treatment	Sedimentation
SIC Codes	0723, Crop Preparation Services for Market
Facility Location (NAD83/WGS84 reference datum)	Latitude: 48.454167°N Longitude: 122.440278°W
Discharge Waterbody Name and Location (NAD83/WGS84 reference datum)	Discharge Location: Outfall 001: Field ditch, which flows to Little Indian Slough Latitude: 48.453263°N Longitude: 122.442093°W

Permit status	
Issuance Date of Permit	XXXX, 2016
Application for Permit Submittal Date	May 4, 2011 (original submittal date) January 6, 2016 (revised permit application)
Date of Ecology Acceptance of Application	January 7, 2016

Inspection status	
Date of Last Sampling Inspection	November 4, 2015
Date of Last Inspection Without Sampling	September 20, 2016

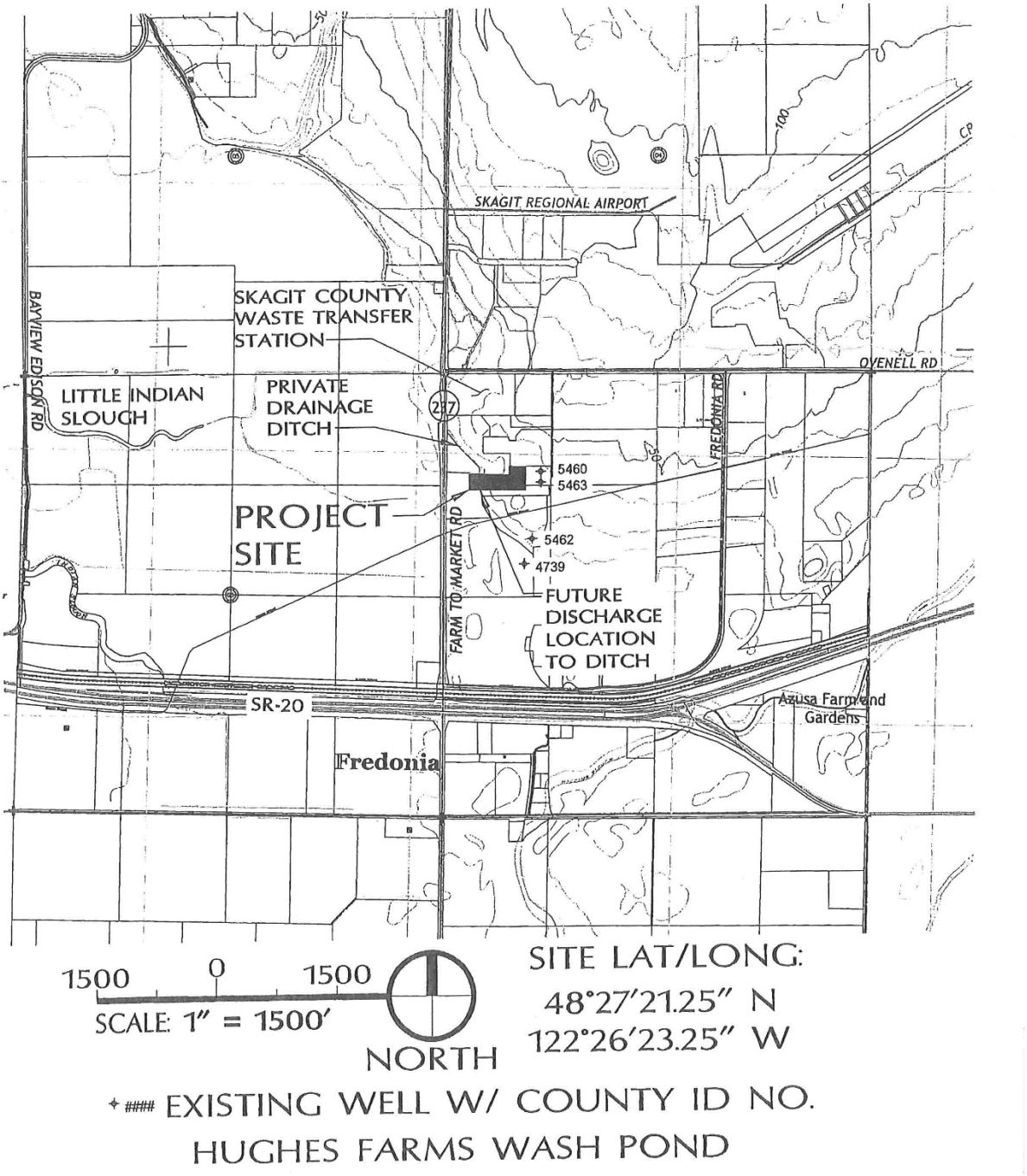

Figure 1. Facility location map

A. Facility description

History

Hughes Farms purchased the property and processing facilities from Norm Dahlstedt in 1989. Prior to the purchase, the facility was used by Dahlstedt Farms to wash and process up to 300 acres of carrots per year. At the time of purchase, Hughes Farms converted the carrot processing line to a potatoes processing line. The facility is also used to store and ship processed potatoes and broccoli.

Industrial process

The facility engages in seasonal potato washing operations between September and April. Broccoli packaging and icing season is from July through October. (No washing is done at the plant. Packaging is occurred in the field.) During operations, the facility operates one 8 – 10-hour shift per day.

Potatoes are harvested (dug) from the fields and loaded into trucks for transport to this facility. Potato trucks are backed into the facility and potatoes are unloaded onto the processing line where the potatoes are washed, inspected, graded, and packaged for wholesale purchase and distribution (See Figure 2). Each truck holds approximately 12 tons of potatoes. The facility can process two trucks per hour.

Wash water for the process line is provided through an on-site well. Wash water is reused approximately three times before it is discharged to an unlined settling pond. In addition, at the end of each day floor washing is conducted using small amount of food grade sanitizer. This washdown water is also discharged to the settling pond.

After packaging, the potatoes are placed in cold storage until they are shipped out in semi-trailer trucks for transport to market. Also stored in cold storage is broccoli product that is harvested and packaged in the field prior to delivery and storage at this facility.

Process wastewater and stormwater treatment and discharge outfall

Process wastewater consists of mostly potato washwater, plant wash down water, and non-contact cooling water from the refrigeration units. Process wastewater and stormwater from the paved area are gravity drained to the two newly constructed lined ponds, where it receives treatment with flocculent to remove solids. The treated water is then pumped back to the plant for reuse. Treated excess water is discharged to the drainage ditch which ultimately flows to Little Indian Slough.

The two cell ponds were constructed in 2015 (see Figure 2). Each cell pond has bottom dimensions of 15’x45’ with interior and exterior 3:1 side slopes with a 12’ wide drivable surface around each cell. Each cell has a storage capacity of 24,000 ft^3.The first cell of the pond receives the silty water from the potato washing operations and stormwater runoff from the paved area, and acts as the primary settling pond. The water with flocculent agent enter the first primary settlement cell, via a manifold to uniformly distribute the water across the pond. Majority of the silt will settle in this cell. Solids accumulated at the bottom of the cell will then be removed with a drive in equipment and haul back to the farm field.

The secondary cell receives treated water from the first cell through a manifold system as described in the primary cell. The polished water from the secondary cell is pumped back to the plant through a 6” 550-foot force main tight line back to the processing plant for re-use.

Excess water from the secondary cell is then gravity drained to the existing ditch which flows northwest across Farms to Market Road to Little Indian Slough and ultimately to Padilla Bay. The distance between the facility discharge ditch to Padilla Bay is at least three miles.

Hughes Farms stopped all discharge into the previously used unlined settling pond, which is a shared pond with multiple industrial facilities.

B. Description of the receiving water

Hughes Farms may discharge stormwater and vegetable wash water to an un-lined ditch which drains to Little Indian Slough and ultimately discharges to Padilla Bay. Other nearby point source outfalls include Chemtrade Sulex sulfur processing facility, Rabanco waste transfer station, and Tri–County Recycling process facility. Ecology issued Municipal SW Phase II Western Washington General Permit number WAR045556 to Skagit County for stormwater discharge from the ditch system to Little Indian Slough. Designated uses of the receiving water under WAC 173-201A includes the following:

> Excellent aquatic life uses; shellfish harvest; primary contact for recreational uses; wildlife habitat; harvesting; commerce/navigation; boating and aesthetics enjoyment.

Under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), Section 303(d), Padilla Bay is currently listed as a water body failing to attain water quality standards for fecal coliform, and Little Indian Slough is listed as a water body failing to attain water quality standards for fecal coliform and dissolved oxygen in the water column.

C. Wastewater characterization

Hughes Farms reported the concentration of pollutants in the discharge in the permit application. The tabulated data represents the quality of the wastewater effluent discharged from Hughes Farms to the lined primary settling pond:

Table 2. Wastewater characterization

Parameter	Units	Average Value	Maximum Value
Flow	gpd	63,000	75,000
BOD	mg/L	10	16
TSS	mg/L	1,100	1,400
Total chlorine	mg/L	ND (MDL: 0.02 mg/l)	ND (MDL: 0.02 mg/l)
Turbidity	NTU		10
pH	Standard units	7	8
Nitrate-N	mg/L	--	0.31
Total phosphorus	mg/L	--	30.7
Color	Color units	--	5000
Manganese	mg/L	3.7	5.18
Sulfate	mg/L	--	7.6
Sodium	mg/L	--	28.9
Temperature	°C	10	15

Table 3. Wastewater characterization from the settling pond

Parameter	Units	Average Value	Maximum Value
Manganese	mg/L	--	0.761

D. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) compliance

To meet the intent of SEPA, the discharge must undergo SEPA review during the permitting process. The facility filed a SEPA checklist with Skagit County and Development Services on October 30, 2014 to construct a wastewater treatment system consisting of two lined ponds, and the Skagit County and Development Services issued a mitigated determination of non-significance for the project on November 4, 2014.

III. Proposed permit limits

Federal and state regulations require that effluent limits in an NPDES permit must be either technology- or water quality-based.

- Technology-based limits are based upon the treatment methods available to treat specific pollutants. Technology-based limits are set by the EPA and published as a regulation, or Ecology develops the limit on a case-by-case basis (40 CFR 125.3, and chapter 173-220 WAC).
- Water quality-based limits are calculated so that the effluent will comply with the Surface Water Quality Standards (chapter 173-201A WAC), Ground Water Standards (chapter 173-200 WAC), Sediment Quality Standards (chapter 173-204 WAC), or the National Toxics Rule (40 CFR 131.36).
- Ecology must apply the most stringent of these limits to each parameter of concern. These limits are described below.

The limits in this permit reflect information received in the application and from supporting reports (engineering, hydrogeology, etc.). Ecology evaluated the permit application and determined the limits needed to comply with the rules adopted by the state of Washington. Ecology does not develop effluent limits for all reported pollutants. Some pollutants are not treatable at the concentrations reported, are not controllable at the source, are not listed in regulation, and do not have a reasonable potential to cause a water quality violation.

Ecology does not usually develop limits for pollutants not reported in the permit application but may be present in the discharge. The permit does not authorize discharge of the non-reported pollutants. During the five-year permit term, the facility's effluent discharge conditions may change from those conditions reported in the permit application. The facility must notify Ecology if significant changes occur in any constituent [40 CFR 122.42(a)]. Until Ecology modifies the permit to reflect additional discharge of pollutants, a permitted facility could be violating its permit.

A. Design criteria

Under WAC 173-220-150 (1)(g), flows and waste loadings must not exceed approved design criteria. The facility constructed two lined ponds in 2015. Each pond is designed to handle a flow rate of 130 gpm with 13-hour settling time after dosing with a flocculating agent to aid in the sedimentation of the wastewater. The design criteria were based on meeting the turbidity discharge limit of at least 25 NTU, a technology-based limit.

Table 4. Design flow rate

Parameter	Design Quantity
Maximum design flow	130 gpm (187,200 gpd)

The treatment system is designed to be operated on a continuous basis; however, the secondary settling pond can be operated on either continuous or batch basis should a longer settling time is needed. Currently, the facility treats approximately 6000 gpd. The treatment system was started up in August 2016. As of today, a discharge has not occurred and the treated water has been routing back to the plant for reuse. Should the facility need to discharge, the maximum discharge rate would be 6000 gpd (3.2% of the design flow rate), and the water would be released to the ditch gradually, to prevent scouring in the ditch. The treatment system is over designed to account for future expansion. According to the facility, there is no plan for expansion during the next 5 years. Therefore, a flow limit in the permit is not necessary and Ecology has determined to require monitoring and reporting only for this permit term.

B. Technology-based effluent limits

Ecology may base effluent limits on the technology available to treat the pollutants at a reasonable cost (technology-based) or it may base them on the effect of the pollutants on the receiving water (water quality-based), whichever is most stringent. The technology-based effluent limitation in this permit is as shown below:

Outfall	Parameter	Maximum Daily Limit
001	Turbidity	25 NTU

Hughes Farms discharges wastewater to the settling ponds where sedimentation treatment is provided for suspended solids and turbidity. Turbidity is typically positively correlated with total suspended solids. No technology-based effluent limit for total suspended solids (TSS) is proposed in this permit, but a limit for turbidity is placed in the permit to indirectly limit TSS discharge concentrations. A turbidity limit of 25 NTU is proposed in the permit for the discharge. Turbidity is chosen as a core parameter in part, because Chapter 173-201A WAC includes a turbidity standard. Turbidity sampling provides a more direct basis for determining compliance with water quality standards.

There are no existing federal categorical limits applicable to this discharge. A technology-based limit of "*25 NTU*" is proposed in this permit as opposed to the water quality-based limit of "*5 NTU over Background*" based on the following reasons: 1) Ecology has already placed a limit of 25 NTU in a discharge permit for another Potato Processing facility; 2) It is impossible to collect a background sample in the discharge ditch because it is often dry, and thus assessment for compliance with the water quality standard cannot be demonstrated; 3) The distance between the discharge point in the ditch and Padilla Bay is at least 3 miles, which allows additional settling time. Therefore, Ecology is confident that Hughes Farms' discharge can meet the turbidity water quality standard when it reaches Padilla Bay.

Since the contaminant of concern in stormwater associated with truck traffic activities are copper, zinc and turbidity, the same parameters imposed in the Industrial Stormwater General Permit, Ecology proposes that the facility monitor for these parameters. No benchmark values are placed in the permit for copper and zinc, but monitoring is required only for this permit cycle. Data collected will be reviewed to assess whether benchmark values for these parameters will be needed for the next permit cycle.

C. Surface water quality-based effluent limits

The Washington State surface water quality standards (chapter 173-201A WAC) are designed to protect existing water quality and preserve the beneficial uses of Washington's surface waters. Waste discharge permits must include conditions that ensure the discharge will meet the surface water quality standards (WAC 173-201A-510). Water quality-based effluent limits may be based on an individual waste load allocation or on a waste load allocation developed during a basin wide total maximum daily load study (TMDL).

Numerical criteria for the protection of aquatic life and recreation

Numerical water quality criteria are listed in the water quality standards for surface waters (chapter 173-201A WAC). They specify the maximum levels of pollutants allowed in receiving water to protect aquatic life and recreation in and on the water. Ecology uses numerical criteria along with chemical and physical data for the wastewater and receiving water to derive the effluent limits in the discharge permit. When surface water quality-based limits are more stringent or potentially more stringent than technology-based limits, the discharge must meet the water quality-based limits.

Numerical criteria for the protection of human health

The U.S. EPA has published 91 numeric water quality criteria for the protection of human health that are applicable to dischargers in Washington State (EPA, 1992). These criteria are designed to protect humans from exposure to pollutants linked to cancer and other diseases, based on consuming fish and shellfish and drinking contaminated surface waters. The water quality standards also include radionuclide criteria to protect humans from the effects of radioactive substances.

Narrative criteria

Narrative water quality criteria (e.g., WAC 173-201A-240(1); 2006) limit the toxic, radioactive, or other deleterious material concentrations that the facility may discharge to levels below those which have the potential to:

- Adversely affect designated water uses.
- Cause acute or chronic toxicity to biota.
- Impair aesthetic values.
- Adversely affect human health.

Narrative criteria protect the specific designated uses of all fresh waters (WAC 173-201A-200, 2006) and of all marine waters (WAC 173-201A-210, 2006) in the state of Washington.

Antidegradation

Description--The purpose of Washington's Antidegradation Policy (WAC 173-201A-300-330; 2006) is to:

- Restore and maintain the highest possible quality of the surface waters of Washington.
- Describe situations under which water quality may be lowered from its current condition.
- Apply to human activities that are likely to have an impact on the water quality of surface water.

- Ensure that all human activities likely to contribute to a lowering of water quality, at a minimum, apply all known, available, and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment (AKART).
- Apply three tiers of protection (described below) for surface waters of the state.

Tier I ensures existing and designated uses are maintained and protected and applies to all waters and all sources of pollutions. Tier II ensures that waters of a higher quality than the criteria assigned are not degraded unless such lowering of water quality is necessary and in the overriding public interest. Tier II applies only to a specific list of polluting activities. Tier III prevents the degradation of waters formally listed as "outstanding resource waters," and applies to all sources of pollution.

A facility must prepare a Tier II analysis when all three of the following conditions are met:

- The facility is planning a new or expanded action.
- Ecology regulates or authorizes the action.
- The action has the potential to cause measurable degradation to existing water quality at the edge of a chronic mixing zone.

http://aww.ecology/programs/wq/swqs/guidance/part3.html

***Facility Specific Requirements*--**The discharge does not have the potential to cause measureable degradation to existing water quality as long as it meets the turbidity limits specified in the permit, therefore this facility must meet Tier I requirements.

Mixing zones

A mixing zone is the defined area in the receiving water surrounding the discharge port(s), where wastewater mixes with receiving water. Within mixing zones the pollutant concentrations may exceed water quality numeric standards, so long as the discharge doesn't interfere with designated uses of the receiving water body (for example, recreation, water supply, and aquatic life and wildlife habitat, etc.) The pollutant concentrations outside of the mixing zones must meet water quality numeric standards.

State and federal rules allow mixing zones because the concentrations and effects of most pollutants diminish rapidly after discharge, due to dilution. Ecology defines mixing zone sizes to limit the amount of time any exposure to the end-of-pipe discharge could harm water quality, plants, or fish.

The state's water quality standards allow Ecology to authorize mixing zones for the facility's permitted wastewater discharges only if those discharges already receive all known, available, and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment (AKART). Mixing zones typically require compliance with water quality criteria within a specified distance from the point of discharge and must not use more than 25% of the available width of the water body for dilution [WAC 173-201A-400 (7)(a)(ii-iii)].

No mixing zone is authorized in this permit.

D. Designated uses and surface water quality criteria

Applicable designated uses and surface water quality criteria are defined in chapter 173-201A WAC. In addition, the U.S. EPA set human health criteria for toxic pollutants (EPA 1992). The table included below summarizes the criteria applicable to this facility's discharge.

- Aquatic Life Uses are designated based on the presence of, or the intent to provide protection for the key uses. All indigenous fish and non-fish aquatic species must be protected in waters of the state in addition to the key species. The Aquatic Life Uses for this receiving water are identified below.

Table 5. Aquatic life uses and associated criteria

Salmonid Spawning, Rearing, and Migration	
Temperature Criteria – Highest 7-DAD MAX	17.5°C (63.5°F)
Dissolved Oxygen Criteria – Lowest 1-Day Minimum	8.0 mg/L
Turbidity Criteria	• 5 NTU over background when the background is 50 NTU or less; or • A 10 percent increase in turbidity when the background turbidity is more than 50 NTU.
Total Dissolved Gas Criteria	Total dissolved gas must not exceed 110 percent of saturation at any point of sample collection.
pH Criteria	The pH must measure within the range of 6.5 to 8.5 with a human-caused variation within the above range of less than 0.5 units.

- The *recreational uses* for this receiving water are identified below.

Table 6. Recreational uses and associated criteria

Recreational Use	**Criteria**
Primary Contact Recreation	Fecal coliform organism levels must not exceed a geometric mean value of 100 colonies /100 mL, with not more than 10 percent of all samples (or any single sample when less than ten sample points exist) obtained for calculating the geometric mean value exceeding 200 colonies /100 mL.

- The *water supply uses* are domestic, agricultural, industrial, and stock watering.
- The *miscellaneous freshwater uses* are wildlife habitat, harvesting, commerce and navigation, boating, and aesthetics.

E. Water quality impairments

Little Indian Slough is listed on the current 303(d) list and is impaired for dissolved oxygen and bacteria. The discharge is not a source of pollutants that will contribute to those impairments.

F. Evaluation of surface water quality-based effluent limits for numeric criteria

Turbidity--TSS is present as a result of washing raw potatoes and broccoli. TSS is an easily determined measure of pollution that may settle in tranquil or slow-moving water bodies. While in suspension, TSS is typically correlated with an increase to the turbidity of the water, reduces light penetration, and impairs the photosynthetic activity of aquatic plants, thereby

contributing to oxygen depletion. TSS can kill fish and shellfish through abrasive injury or clogging of gills and respiratory passages. Excessive TSS can destroy habitats by filling interstitial spaces in sediments.

Ecology evaluated the potential impact of turbidity based on the total suspended solids in the effluent. The proposed permit includes a turbidity limit which requires the facility to demonstrate compliance with water quality standards in the receiving water (see page 10 of the fact sheet, under technology-based limit).

G. Human health

Washington's water quality standards include 91 numeric human health-based criteria that Ecology must consider when writing NPDES permits. These criteria were established in 1992 by the U.S. EPA in its National Toxics Rule (40 CFR 131.36). The National Toxics Rule allows states to use mixing zones to evaluate whether discharges comply with human health criteria.

Ecology determined the applicant's discharge is unlikely to contain chemicals regulated to protect human health. Ecology will reevaluate this discharge for impacts to human health at the next permit reissuance.

H. Sediment quality

The aquatic sediment standards (chapter 173-204 WAC) protect aquatic biota and human health. Under these standards Ecology may require a facility to evaluate the potential for its discharge to cause a violation of sediment standards (WAC 173-204-400). You can obtain additional information about sediments at the Aquatic Lands Cleanup Unit website. http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/smu/sediment.html

Through a review of the discharger characteristics and of the effluent characteristics, Ecology determined that this discharge has no reasonable potential to violate the sediment management standards.

I. Ground water quality limits

The ground water quality standards (Chapter 173-200 WAC) protect beneficial uses of ground water. Permit issued by Ecology must not allow violations of those standards (WAC 173-200-100).

No ground water quality is set in this permit because the Permittee does not discharge to ground surface.

J. Whole effluent toxicity

The water quality standards for surface waters forbid discharge of effluent that has the potential to cause toxic effects in the receiving waters. Many toxic pollutants cannot be measured by commonly available detection methods. However, laboratory tests can measure toxicity directly by exposing living organisms to the wastewater and measuring their responses. These tests measure the aggregate toxicity of the whole effluent, so this approach is called whole effluent toxicity (WET) testing. Some WET tests measure acute toxicity and other WET tests measure chronic toxicity.

Using the screening criteria in chapter 173-205-040 WAC, Ecology determined that toxic effects caused by unidentified pollutants in the effluent are unlikely. Therefore, this permit does not require WET testing. Ecology may require WET testing in the future if it receives information indicating that toxicity may be present in this effluent.

IV. Monitoring requirements

Ecology requires monitoring, recording, and reporting (WAC 173-220-210 and 40 CFR 122.41) to verify that the treatment process is functioning correctly and that the discharge complies with the permit's effluent limits.

The monitoring schedule is detailed in the proposed permit under Special Condition S.2. Specified monitoring frequencies take into account the quantity and variability of the discharge, the treatment method, past compliance, significance of pollutants, and cost of monitoring.

A. Lab accreditation

Ecology requires that facilities must use a laboratory registered or accredited under the provisions of chapter 173-50 WAC, Accreditation of Environmental Laboratories, to prepare all monitoring data (with the exception of certain parameters).

V. Other permit conditions

A. Reporting and record keeping

Ecology based Special Condition S3 on its authority to specify any appropriate reporting and record keeping requirements to prevent and control waste discharges (WAC 173-220-210).

B. Operation and maintenance manual

Ecology requires industries to take all reasonable steps to properly operate and maintain their wastewater treatment system in accordance with state and federal regulations [40 CFR 122.41(e) and WAC 173-220-150 (1)(g)]. Ecology requires Hughes Farms to follow the best management practices listed in S4 of the permit. Implementation of the procedures in this section ensures the facility's compliance with the terms and limits in the permit.

C. General conditions

Ecology bases the standardized General Conditions on state and federal law and regulations. They are included in all individual industrial NPDES permit issued by Ecology.

VI. Permit issuance procedures

A. Permit modifications

Ecology may modify this permit to impose numerical limits, if necessary, to comply with water quality standards for surface waters, with sediment quality standards, or with water quality standards for ground waters, after obtaining new information from sources such as inspections, effluent monitoring, outfall studies, and effluent mixing studies.

Ecology may also modify this permit to comply with new or amended state or federal regulations.

B. Proposed permit Issuance

This proposed permit includes all statutory requirements for Ecology to authorize a wastewater discharge. The permit includes limits and conditions to protect human health and aquatic life, and the beneficial uses of waters of the state of Washington. Ecology proposes to issue this permit for a term of 5 years.

VII. References for text and appendices

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

1992. National Toxics Rule. Federal Register, V. 57, No. 246, Tuesday, December 22, 1992.

1991. *Technical Support Document for Water Quality-based Toxics Control*. EPA/505/2-90-001.

1988. *Technical Guidance on Supplementary Stream Design Conditions for Steady State Modeling*. USEPA Office of Water, Washington, D.C.

1985. *Water Quality Assessment: A Screening Procedure for Toxic and Conventional Pollutants in Surface and Ground Water*. EPA/600/6-85/002a.

1983. *Water Quality Standards Handbook*. USEPA Office of Water, Washington, D.C.

Hughes Farms

2009. Application for a Wastewater Discharge Permit for Discharge of Industrial Wastewater to Groundwater.

2011. EPA Application for Permit to Discharge Process Wastewater Form 2D (New Sources and New Discharges).

Tsivoglou, E.C., and J.R. Wallace.

1972. *Characterization of Stream Reaeration Capacity*. EPA-R3-72-012. (Cited in EPA 1985 op.cit.)

Washington State Department of Ecology.

November 2010. *Permit Writer's Manual*. Publication Number 92-109 (http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/92109.html)

2007. *Focus Sheet on Solid Waste Control Plan, Developing a Solid Waste Control Plan for Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permittees*. Publication Number 07-10-024.

Laws and Regulations (http://www.ecy.wa.gov/laws-rules/index.html)

Permit and Wastewater Related Information (http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/index.html)

February 2007. *Focus Sheet on Solid Waste Control Plan, Developing a Solid Waste Control Plan for Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permittees*, Publication Number 07-10-024. http://www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0710024.pdf

Wright, R.M., and A.J. McDonnell.

1979. *In-stream Deoxygenation Rate Prediction*. Journal Environmental Engineering Division, ASCE. 105(EE2). (Cited in EPA 1985 op.cit.)

Appendix A – Public involvement information

Ecology proposes to issue a permit to Hughes Farms, Inc. The permit includes wastewater discharge limits and other conditions. This fact sheet describes the facility and Ecology's reasons for requiring permit conditions.

Ecology placed a Public Notice of Application on December 24 and December 31, 2011, in the *Skagit Valley Herald* to inform the public about the submitted application and to invite comment on the issuance of this permit.

Ecology will place a Public Notice of Draft on October 21, 2016 in the *Skagit Valley Herald* to inform the public and to invite comment on the proposed draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit and fact sheet.

The notice:

- Tells where copies of the draft permit and fact sheet are available for public evaluation (a local public library, the closest regional or field office, posted on our website).
- Offers to provide the documents in an alternate format to accommodate special needs.
- Urges people to submit their comments, in writing, before the end of the comment period.
- Tells how to request a public hearing of comments about the proposed NPDES permit.
- Explains the next step(s) in the permitting process.

Ecology has published a document entitled *Frequently Asked Questions about Effective Public Commenting* which is available on our website at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0307023.html.

You may obtain further information from Ecology by telephone, (425) 649-7201, or by writing to the address listed below.

Water Quality Permit Coordinator
Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

The primary author of this permit and fact sheet is Jeanne Tran.

Appendix B – Your right to appeal

You have a right to appeal this permit to the Pollution Control Hearing Board (PCHB) within 30 days of the date of receipt of the final permit. The appeal process is governed by chapter 43.21B RCW and chapter 371-08 WAC. "Date of receipt" is defined in RCW 43.21B.001(2) (see glossary).

To appeal you must do the following within 30 days of the date of receipt of this permit:

- File your appeal and a copy of this permit with the PCHB (see addresses below). Filing means actual receipt by the PCHB during regular business hours.
- Serve a copy of your appeal and this permit on Ecology in paper form - by mail or in person. (See addresses below.) E-mail is not accepted.

You must also comply with other applicable requirements in chapter 43.21B RCW and chapter 371-08 WAC.

ADDRESS AND LOCATION INFORMATION

Street Addresses	Mailing Addresses
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Appendix C – Glossary

1-DMax or 1-day maximum temperature -- The highest water temperature reached on any given day. This measure can be obtained using calibrated maximum/minimum thermometers or continuous monitoring probes having sampling intervals of thirty minutes or less.

7-DADMax or 7-day average of the daily maximum temperatures -- The arithmetic average of seven consecutive measures of daily maximum temperatures. The 7-DADMax for any individual day is calculated by averaging that day's daily maximum temperature with the daily maximum temperatures of the three days prior and the three days after that date.

Acute toxicity -- The lethal effect of a compound on an organism that occurs in a short time period, usually 48 to 96 hours.

AKART -- The acronym for "all known, available, and reasonable methods of prevention, control and treatment." AKART is a technology-based approach to limiting pollutants from wastewater discharges, which requires an engineering judgment and an economic judgment. AKART must be applied to all wastes and contaminants prior to entry into waters of the state in accordance with RCW 90.48.010 and 520, WAC 173-200-030(2)(c)(ii), and WAC 173-216-110(1)(a).

Alternate point of compliance -- An alternative location in the ground water from the point of compliance where compliance with the ground water standards is measured. It may be established in the ground water at locations some distance from the discharge source, up to, but not exceeding the property boundary and is determined on a site specific basis following an AKART analysis. An "early warning value" must be used when an alternate point is established. An alternate point of compliance must be determined and approved in accordance with WAC 173-200-060(2).

Ambient water quality -- The existing environmental condition of the water in a receiving water body.

Ammonia -- Ammonia is produced by the breakdown of nitrogenous materials in wastewater. Ammonia is toxic to aquatic organisms, exerts an oxygen demand, and contributes to eutrophication. It also increases the amount of chlorine needed to disinfect wastewater.

Annual average design flow (AADF) -- The average of the daily flow volumes anticipated to occur over a calendar year.

Average monthly discharge limit -- The average of the measured values obtained over a calendar month's time.

Background water quality -- The concentrations of chemical, physical, biological or radiological constituents or other characteristics in or of ground water at a particular point in time upgradient of an activity that has not been affected by that activity [WAC 173-200-020(3)]. Background water quality for any parameter is statistically defined as the 95% upper tolerance interval with a 95% confidence based on at least eight hydraulically upgradient water quality samples. The eight samples are collected over a period of at least one year, with no more than one sample collected during any month in a single calendar year.

Best management practices (BMPs) -- Schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other physical, structural and/or managerial practices to prevent or reduce the pollution of waters of the state. BMPs include treatment systems, operating procedures, and practices to control: plant site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage. BMPs may be further categorized as operational, source control, erosion and sediment control, and treatment BMPs.

BOD_5 -- Determining the five-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand of an effluent is an indirect way of measuring the quantity of organic material present in an effluent that is utilized by bacteria. The BOD_5 is used in modeling to measure the reduction of dissolved oxygen in receiving waters after effluent is discharged. Stress caused by reduced dissolved oxygen levels makes organisms less competitive and less able to sustain their species in the aquatic environment. Although BOD_5 is not a specific compound, it is defined as a conventional pollutant under the federal Clean Water Act.

Bypass -- The intentional diversion of waste streams from any portion of a treatment facility.

Categorical pretreatment standards -- National pretreatment standards specifying quantities or concentrations of pollutants or pollutant properties, which may be discharged to a POTW by existing or new industrial users in specific industrial subcategories.

Chlorine -- A chemical used to disinfect wastewaters of pathogens harmful to human health. It is also extremely toxic to aquatic life.

Chronic toxicity -- The effect of a compound on an organism over a relatively long time, often 1/10 of an organism's lifespan or more. Chronic toxicity can measure survival, reproduction or growth rates, or other parameters to measure the toxic effects of a compound or combination of compounds.

Clean water act (CWA) -- The federal Water Pollution Control Act enacted by Public Law 92-500, as amended by Public Laws 95-217, 95-576, 96-483, 97-117; USC 1251 et seq.

Compliance inspection-without sampling -- A site visit for the purpose of determining the compliance of a facility with the terms and conditions of its permit or with applicable statutes and regulations.

Compliance inspection-with sampling -- A site visit for the purpose of determining the compliance of a facility with the terms and conditions of its permit or with applicable statutes and regulations. In addition it includes as a minimum, sampling and analysis for all parameters with limits in the permit to ascertain compliance with those limits; and, for municipal facilities, sampling of influent to ascertain compliance with the 85 percent removal requirement. Ecology may conduct additional sampling.

Composite sample -- A mixture of grab samples collected at the same sampling point at different times, formed either by continuous sampling or by mixing discrete samples. May be "time-composite" (collected at constant time intervals) or "flow-proportional" (collected either as a constant sample volume at time intervals proportional to stream flow, or collected by increasing the volume of each aliquot as the flow increased while maintaining a constant time interval between the aliquots).

Construction activity -- Clearing, grading, excavation, and any other activity, which disturbs the surface of the land. Such activities may include road building; construction of residential houses, office buildings, or industrial buildings; and demolition activity.

Continuous monitoring -- Uninterrupted, unless otherwise noted in the permit.

Critical condition -- The time during which the combination of receiving water and waste discharge conditions have the highest potential for causing toxicity in the receiving water environment. This situation usually occurs when the flow within a water body is low, thus, its ability to dilute effluent is reduced.

Date of receipt -- This is defined in RCW 43.21B.001(2) as five business days after the date of mailing; or the date of actual receipt, when the actual receipt date can be proven by a preponderance of the evidence. The recipient's sworn affidavit or declaration indicating the date of receipt, which is unchallenged by the agency, constitutes sufficient evidence of actual receipt. The date of actual receipt, however, may not exceed forty-five days from the date of mailing.

Detection limit -- See Method Detection Level.

Dilution factor (DF) -- A measure of the amount of mixing of effluent and receiving water that occurs at the boundary of the mixing zone. Expressed as the inverse of the percent effluent fraction, for example, a dilution factor of 10 means the effluent comprises 10% by volume and the receiving water 90%.

Distribution uniformity -- The uniformity of infiltration (or application in the case of sprinkle or trickle irrigation) throughout the field expressed as a percent relating to the average depth infiltrated in the lowest one-quarter of the area to the average depth of water infiltrated.

Early warning value -- The concentration of a pollutant set in accordance with WAC 173-200-070 that is a percentage of an enforcement limit. It may be established in the effluent, ground water, surface water, the vadose zone or within the treatment process. This value acts as a trigger to detect and respond to increasing contaminant concentrations prior to the degradation of a beneficial use.

Enforcement limit -- The concentration assigned to a contaminant in the ground water at the point of compliance for the purpose of regulation, [WAC 173-200-020(11)]. This limit assures that a ground water criterion will not be exceeded and that background water quality will be protected.

Engineering report -- A document that thoroughly examines the engineering and administrative aspects of a particular domestic or industrial wastewater facility. The report must contain the appropriate information required in WAC 173-240-060 or 173-240-130.

Fecal coliform bacteria -- Fecal coliform bacteria are used as indicators of pathogenic bacteria in the effluent that are harmful to humans. Pathogenic bacteria in wastewater discharges are controlled by disinfecting the wastewater. The presence of high numbers of fecal coliform bacteria in a water body can indicate the recent release of untreated wastewater and/or the presence of animal feces.

Grab sample -- A single sample or measurement taken at a specific time or over as short a period of time as is feasible.

Ground water -- Water in a saturated zone or stratum beneath the surface of land or below a surface water body.

Industrial user -- A discharger of wastewater to the sanitary sewer that is not sanitary wastewater or is not equivalent to sanitary wastewater in character.

Industrial wastewater -- Water or liquid-carried waste from industrial or commercial processes, as distinct from domestic wastewater. These wastes may result from any process or activity of industry, manufacture, trade or business; from the development of any natural resource; or from animal operations such as feed lots, poultry houses, or dairies. The term includes contaminated storm water and, also, leachate from solid waste facilities.

Interference -- A discharge which, alone or in conjunction with a discharge or discharges from other sources, both:

- Inhibits or disrupts the POTW, its treatment processes or operations, or its sludge processes, use or disposal; and
- Therefore is a cause of a violation of any requirement of the POTW's NPDES permit (including an increase in the magnitude or duration of a violation) or of the prevention of sewage sludge use or disposal in compliance with the following statutory provisions and regulations or permits issued thereunder (or more stringent State or local regulations): Section 405 of the Clean Water Act, the Solid Waste Disposal Act (SWDA) [including Title II, more commonly referred to as the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and including State regulations contained in any State sludge management plan prepared pursuant to subtitle D of the SWDA], sludge regulations appearing in 40 CFR Part 507, the Clean Air Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act, and the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act.

Local limits -- Specific prohibitions or limits on pollutants or pollutant parameters developed by a POTW.

Major facility -- A facility discharging to surface water with an EPA rating score of > 80 points based on such factors as flow volume, toxic pollutant potential, and public health impact.

Maximum daily discharge limit -- The highest allowable daily discharge of a pollutant measured during a calendar day or any 24-hour period that reasonably represents the calendar day for purposes of sampling. The daily discharge is calculated as the average measurement of the pollutant over the day.

Maximum day design flow (MDDF) -- The largest volume of flow anticipated to occur during a one-day period, expressed as a daily average.

Maximum month design flow (MMDF) -- The largest volume of flow anticipated to occur during a continuous 30-day period, expressed as a daily average.

Maximum week design flow (MWDF) -- The largest volume of flow anticipated to occur during a continuous 7-day period, expressed as a daily average.

Method detection level (MDL) -- The minimum concentration of a substance that can be measured and reported with 99 percent confidence that the pollutant concentration is above zero and is determined from analysis of a sample in a given matrix containing the pollutant.

Minor facility -- A facility discharging to surface water with an EPA rating score of < 80 points based on such factors as flow volume, toxic pollutant potential, and public health impact.

Mixing zone -- An area that surrounds an effluent discharge within which water quality criteria may be exceeded. The permit specifies the area of the authorized mixing zone that Ecology defines following procedures outlined in state regulations (chapter 173-201A WAC).

National pollutant discharge elimination system (NPDES) -- The NPDES (Section 402 of the Clean Water Act) is the federal wastewater permitting system for discharges to navigable waters of the United States. Many states, including the state of Washington, have been delegated the authority to issue these permits. NPDES permits issued by Washington State permit writers are joint NPDES/State permits issued under both state and federal laws.

pH -- The pH of a liquid measures its acidity or alkalinity. It is the negative logarithm of the hydrogen ion concentration. A pH of 7 is defined as neutral and large variations above or below this value are considered harmful to most aquatic life.

Pass-through -- A discharge which exits the POTW into waters of the State in quantities or concentrations which, alone or in conjunction with a discharge or discharges from other sources, is a cause of a violation of any requirement of the POTW's NPDES permit (including an increase in the magnitude or duration of a violation), or which is a cause of a violation of State water quality standards.

Peak hour design flow (PHDF) -- The largest volume of flow anticipated to occur during a one- period, expressed as a daily or hourly average.

Peak instantaneous design flow (PIDF) -- The maximum anticipated instantaneous flow.

Point of compliance -- The location in the ground water where the enforcement limit must not be exceeded and a facility must comply with the Ground Water Quality Standards. Ecology determines this limit on a site-specific basis. Ecology locates the point of compliance in the ground water as near and directly downgradient from the pollutant source as technically, hydrogeologically, and geographically feasible, unless it approves an alternative point of compliance.

Potential significant industrial user (PSIU) --A potential significant industrial user is defined as an Industrial User that does not meet the criteria for a Significant Industrial User, but which discharges wastewater meeting one or more of the following criteria:

a. Exceeds 0.5 % of treatment plant design capacity criteria and discharges <25,000 gallons per day; or

b. Is a member of a group of similar industrial users which, taken together, have the potential to cause pass through or interference at the POTW (e.g. facilities which develop photographic film or paper, and car washes).

Ecology may determine that a discharger initially classified as a potential significant industrial user should be managed as a significant industrial user.

Quantitation level (QL) -- Also known as Minimum Level of Quantitation (ML) – The lowest level at which the entire analytical system must give a recognizable signal and acceptable calibration point for the analyte. It is equivalent to the concentration of the lowest calibration standard, assuming that the lab has used all method-specified sample weights, volumes, and

cleanup procedures. The QL is calculated by multiplying the MDL by 3.18 and rounding the result to the number nearest to (1, 2, or 5) x 10^n, where n is an integer (64 FR 30417).
ALSO GIVEN AS:
The smallest detectable concentration of analyte greater than the Detection Limit (DL) where the accuracy (precision & bias) achieves the objectives of the intended purpose. (Report of the Federal Advisory Committee on Detection and Quantitation Approaches and Uses in Clean Water Act Programs Submitted to the US Environmental Protection Agency, December 2007).

Reasonable potential -- A reasonable potential to cause a water quality violation, or loss of sensitive and/or important habitat.

Responsible corporate officer -- A president, secretary, treasurer, or vice-president of the corporation in charge of a principal business function, or any other person who performs similar policy- or decision-making functions for the corporation, or the manager of one or more manufacturing, production, or operating facilities employing more than 250 persons or have gross annual sales or expenditures exceeding $25 million (in second quarter 1980 dollars), if authority to sign documents has been assigned or delegated to the manager in accordance with corporate procedures (40 CFR 122.22).

Significant industrial user (SIU) --

1) All industrial users subject to Categorical Pretreatment Standards under 40 CFR 403.6 and 40 CFR chapter I, subchapter N; and

2) Any other industrial user that: discharges an average of 25,000 gallons per day or more of process wastewater to the POTW (excluding sanitary, noncontact cooling, and boiler blow-down wastewater); contributes a process wastestream that makes up 5 percent or more of the average dry weather hydraulic or organic capacity of the POTW treatment plant; or is designated as such by the Control Authority* on the basis that the industrial user has a reasonable potential for adversely affecting the POTW's operation or for violating any pretreatment standard or requirement [in accordance with 40 CFR 403.8(f)(6)].

   Upon finding that the industrial user meeting the criteria in paragraph 2, above, has no reasonable potential for adversely affecting the POTW's operation or for violating any pretreatment standard or requirement, the Control Authority* may at any time, on its own initiative or in response to a petition received from an industrial user or POTW, and in accordance with 40 CFR 403.8(f)(6), determine that such industrial user is not a significant industrial user.

* The term "Control Authority" refers to the Washington State Department of Ecology in the case of non-delegated POTWs or to the POTW in the case of delegated POTWs.

Slug discharge -- Any discharge of a non-routine, episodic nature, including but not limited to an accidental spill or a non-customary batch discharge to the POTW. This may include any pollutant released at a flow rate that may cause interference or pass through with the POTW or in any way violate the permit conditions or the POTW's regulations and local limits.

Soil scientist -- An individual who is registered as a Certified or Registered Professional Soil Scientist or as a Certified Professional Soil Specialist by the American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils or by the National Society of Consulting Scientists or who has the credentials for membership. Minimum requirements for eligibility

are: possession of a baccalaureate, masters, or doctorate degree from a U.S. or Canadian institution with a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours professional core courses in agronomy, crops or soils, and have 5, 3, or 1 year(s), respectively, of professional experience working in the area of agronomy, crops, or soils.

Solid waste -- All putrescible and non-putrescible solid and semisolid wastes including, but not limited to, garbage, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, swill, sewage sludge, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles or parts thereof, contaminated soils and contaminated dredged material, and recyclable materials.

Soluble BOD_5 -- Determining the soluble fraction of Biochemical Oxygen Demand of an effluent is an indirect way of measuring the quantity of soluble organic material present in an effluent that is utilized by bacteria. Although the soluble BOD_5 test is not specifically described in Standard Methods, filtering the raw sample through at least a 1.2 um filter prior to running the standard BOD_5 test is sufficient to remove the particulate organic fraction.

State waters -- Lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington.

Stormwater -- That portion of precipitation that does not naturally percolate into the ground or evaporate, but flows via overland flow, interflow, pipes, and other features of a storm water drainage system into a defined surface water body, or a constructed infiltration facility.

Technology-based effluent limit -- A permit limit based on the ability of a treatment method to reduce the pollutant.

Total coliform bacteria -- A microbiological test, which detects and enumerates the total coliform group of bacteria in water samples.

Total dissolved solids -- That portion of total solids in water or wastewater that passes through a specific filter.

Total suspended solids (TSS) -- Total suspended solids is the particulate material in an effluent. Large quantities of TSS discharged to a receiving water may result in solids accumulation. Apart from any toxic effects attributable to substances leached out by water, suspended solids may kill fish, shellfish, and other aquatic organisms by causing abrasive injuries and by clogging the gills and respiratory passages of various aquatic fauna. Indirectly, suspended solids can screen out light and can promote and maintain the development of noxious conditions through oxygen depletion.

Upset -- An exceptional incident in which there is unintentional and temporary noncompliance with technology-based permit effluent limits because of factors beyond the reasonable control of the Permittee. An upset does not include noncompliance to the extent caused by operational error, improperly designed treatment facilities, lack of preventative maintenance, or careless or improper operation.

Water quality-based effluent limit -- A limit imposed on the concentration of an effluent parameter to prevent the concentration of that parameter from exceeding its water quality criterion after discharge into receiving waters.

Appendix D – Process flow diagram

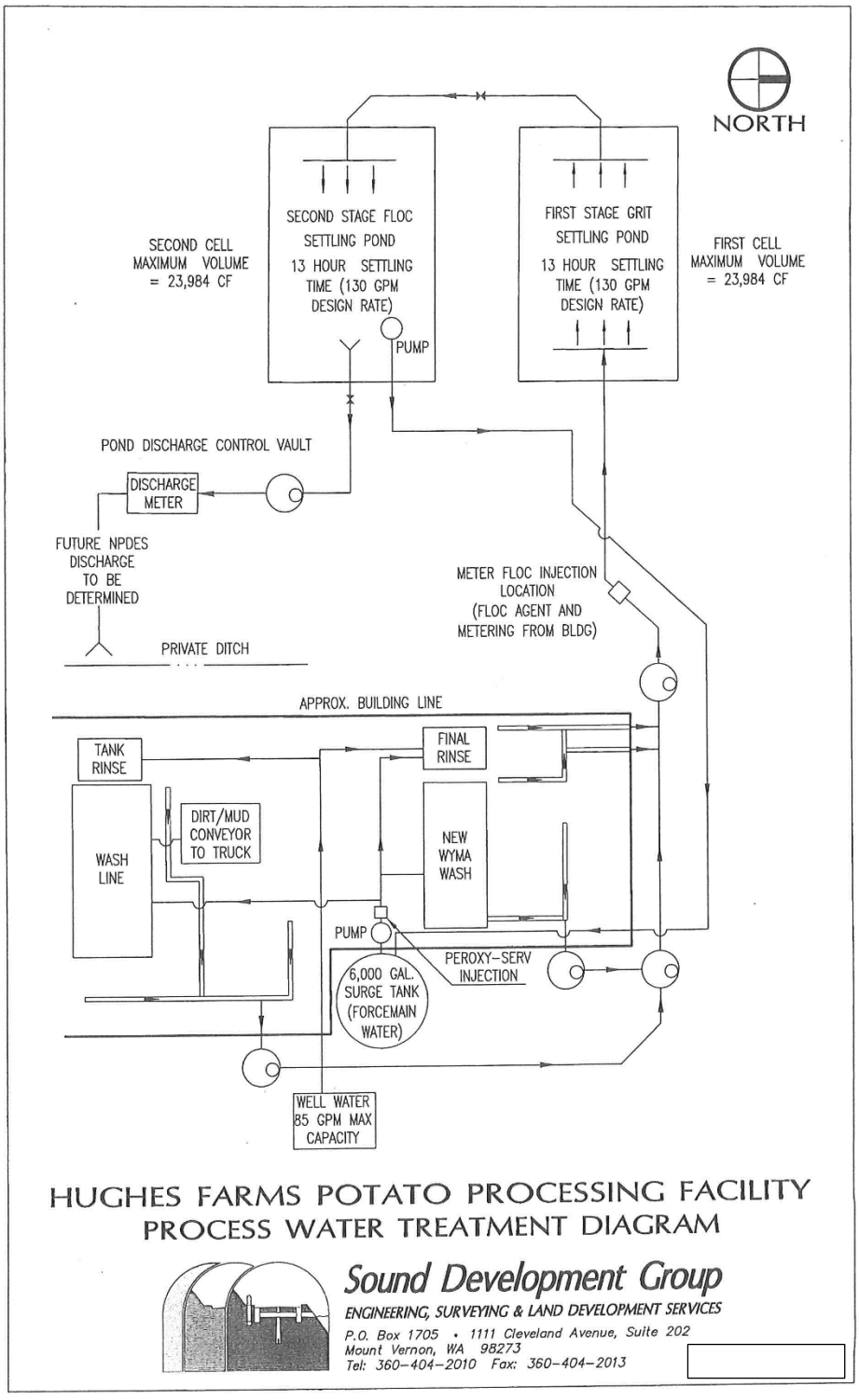

Figure 2. Production schematic flow diagram

Appendix E – Response to comments

This section will be completed after the Public Notice of Draft comment period.